



U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER

TO: Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

FROM: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Majority Staff

SUBJECT: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure markup of Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; H.R. _____, to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to construct a greenhouse facility at its museum support facility in Suitland, Maryland, and for other purposes; H. Res. 936, honoring the 200th anniversary of the Gallatin Report on Roads and Canals, celebrating the national unity the Gallatin Report engendered, and recognizing the vast contributions that national planning efforts have provided to the United States; H. Res. 964, to promote the safe operation of 15 passenger vans; General Services Administration Lease Resolution; General Services Administration Section 11(b) Resolution, and other matters cleared for consideration

PURPOSE OF MARKUP

On Thursday, February 28, 2008, at 11:00 a.m., in room 2167 Rayburn House Office Building, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is scheduled to mark up Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; H.R. _____, to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to construct a greenhouse facility at its museum support facility in Suitland, Maryland, and for other purposes; H. Res. 936, honoring the 200th anniversary of the Gallatin Report on Roads and Canals, celebrating the national unity the Gallatin Report engendered, and recognizing the vast contributions that national planning efforts have provided to the United States; H. Res. 964, to promote the safe operation of 15 passenger vans; General Services Administration Lease Resolution; General Services Administration Section 11(b) Resolution; and other matters cleared for consideration.

**FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET VIEWS AND ESTIMATES OF THE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Background

Under section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act and clause 4(f)(1) of the Rules of the House of Representatives, each legislative committee is required to submit to the Committee on the Budget views and estimates on the forthcoming budget. In general, the Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for fiscal year 2009 ("Views and Estimates") urge that programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee be funded at the authorized funding levels in fiscal year 2009.

Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation for FY 2009

The Views and Estimates state that:

- The Committee's legislative priorities this year will include reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA"), selected provisions of the Clean Water Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act ("CERCLA"), the Coast Guard, Amtrak, and the Federal Railroad Administration, and enactment of a Water Resources Development Act.
- The Committee has identified several areas in which the Administration's fiscal year (FY) 2009 budget request does not adequately fund our nation's critical infrastructure needs. These areas include highways, public transit, Amtrak, aviation, wastewater treatment, and Army Corps of Engineers programs.
- The Committee urges that the Congressional Budget Resolution meet the important funding needs identified by the Committee, to improve our nation's infrastructure and transportation safety and ensure that vital services, such as those provided by the Coast Guard, are maintained.
- While the Views and Estimates reflect a bipartisan effort, the Committee emphasizes that not all Members of the Committee necessarily agree with every aspect of the report. Accordingly, the Committee reserves its flexibility to determine program needs and recognizes the potential for funding changes as the Committee and Congress work their will through the legislative process.

Amendments

No amendments are expected at this time.

**H.R. ____, TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TO
CONSTRUCT A GREENHOUSE FACILITY AT ITS MUSEUM SUPPORT FACILITY IN SUITLAND,
MARYLAND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Background

H.R. ____ authorizes the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to construct a greenhouse facility at its museum support facility in Suitland, Maryland. This greenhouse facility would support the Office of Facilities Engineering and Operations (“OFEO”), Horticulture Services Division (“HSD”). The OFEO HSD provides services for the Smithsonian museums and units through planting for exhibits and special events, and through development and management of the Smithsonian public gardens.

The Smithsonian Institution currently leases a 55,000-square foot greenhouse complex on the campus of the Armed Forces Retirement Homes (“AFRH”) in Washington, DC. The AFRH is redeveloping the site that houses the Smithsonian Institution greenhouses. The Smithsonian Institution’s lease expires on September 30, 2008, which creates a need for the Smithsonian Institution to construct a new facility to house its horticultural operations. H.R. ____ authorizes \$12 million to construct a new greenhouse facility. This project includes site preparation, a 10,900-square foot head house, and 44,500-square foot greenhouse, along with outdoor growing and storage areas.

Prior Legislative and Oversight Activities

In FY 2008, Congress appropriated \$2.8 million for this project in the “Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008”. In FY 2009, the President’s budget requests \$8.2 million for the project.

The Committee Transportation and Infrastructure has taken no prior action on a bill to authorize greenhouse construction.

In the 108th Congress, Congress enacted the Smithsonian Facilities Authorization Act (P.L. 108-72), which authorizes the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution to provide additional space and resources for the national collections held in trust by the Institution.

Amendments

No amendments to the bill are expected at this time.

H. RES. 936, HONORING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GALLATIN REPORT ON ROADS AND CANALS, CELEBRATING THE NATIONAL UNITY THE GALLATIN REPORT ENGENDERED, AND RECOGNIZING THE VAST CONTRIBUTIONS THAT NATIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS HAVE PROVIDED TO THE UNITED STATES

Background

H. Res. 936 honors the 200th anniversary of the Gallatin Report on Roads and Canals, celebrating the national unity the Gallatin Report engendered, and recognizing the vast contributions that national planning efforts have provided to the United States.

President Thomas Jefferson commissioned his Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, to provide a new vision for transportation that would unite the young Republic. This year marks the bicentennial of the report that Secretary Gallatin presented to President Jefferson, which proposed transportation improvements not as ends in themselves, but as a means to further national unity. This unity was part of the promise of the American Revolution, as James Madison, writing in The Federalist No. 14, emphasized, "Let it be remarked . . . that the intercourse throughout the Union will be facilitated by new improvements. Roads will everywhere be shortened, and kept in better order; accommodations for travelers will be multiplied and meliorated; an interior navigation on our eastern side will be opened throughout, or nearly throughout, the whole extent of the 13 States." His words have served as a worthy reminder of the needs for transportation infrastructure since that time

The genius of the Gallatin plan was its alignment of the hopes of the nation with the opportunities presented by access to new markets, populations, and territories. The United States, as a result of Gallatin's legacy, has a record of successful infrastructure partnerships, including the partnerships that built the Erie Canal, the transcontinental railway, the National Highway System, and transit projects across the country.

The Gallatin Report highlighted the importance of a strong national infrastructure. This need remains relevant today as we face new challenges in maintaining, improving and financing the infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of our economy and our mobility.

Prior Legislative and Oversight Activities

On January 23, 2008, Representative Earl Blumenauer introduced H. Res. 936. This resolution has not been introduced in a previous Congress.

Amendments

Chairman Oberstar will offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute to the resolution. The amendment makes technical corrections to the resolution. No other amendments are expected at this time.

H. RES. 964, TO PROMOTE THE SAFE OPERATION OF 15-PASSENGER VANS

Background

H. Res. 964 seeks to promote the safe operation of 15-passenger vans on our nation's roads. H. Res. 964 resolves that the House of Representatives recognizes the need for awareness regarding the increased risks of driving 15-passenger vans and encourages any operator of such vehicle to provide adequate training for drivers and safety information, including the necessity for wearing seat belts, to passengers.

An organization that owns or operates a 15-passenger van should not allow an inexperienced driver of such a van to drive the van because design and handling characteristics of a 15-passenger van make it drive differently than other passenger vehicles. Statistics have found that the safety records of drivers experienced in driving 15-passenger vans are significantly better than drivers not experienced in driving such vans.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, from 1997 through 2006, there were 1,090 fatalities of van occupants resulting from crashes involving 15-passenger vans of which 534 resulted from largely preventable single-vehicle rollover crashes of such vans. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, in 2005, 59 percent of the fatalities in 15-passenger van crashes occurred in single-vehicle rollover crashes, which is higher than the rollover fatality rates for any other passenger vehicle type. Seat belts dramatically increase the chances of survival during a rollover crash and nearly 80 percent of those who died in 15-passenger van rollovers nationwide between 19909 and 2003 were not buckled up.

Prior Legislative and Oversight Activities

On February 7, 2008, Representative John J. Duncan, Jr. introduced H. Res. 964. This resolution has not been introduced in a previous Congress.

Amendments

An amendment making technical corrections to the resolution may be offered. No other amendments to the resolution are expected at this time.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION LEASE RESOLUTION

Background

This resolution amends a June 28, 2007 resolution of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure authorizing a lease of up to 254,382 rentable square feet for the consolidation of Federal Bureau of Investigation offices in San Diego, California, at a proposed annual cost of \$11,447,190 for a lease term of up to 20 years. The amended resolution retains all the original terms with exception to the delineated area. The amended resolution expands the delineated area in the original prospectus to create an expanded search area for the procurement.

The original resolution delineated an area that included that portion of the greater San Diego area, including the central business area, bounded by Hwy. 94 and G St. on the south; San Diego Bay and the Pacific Ocean on the west; Carmel Valley Dr. and Hwy. 56 on the north; and I-15 on the east. The amended resolution delineates an area that includes that portion of the greater San Diego area, including the central business area, bounded by I-905 on the south; San Diego Bay and the Pacific Ocean on the west; Carmel Valley Dr. and Hwy. 56 on the north; and I-15 and I-805 on the east.

Prior Legislative and Oversight Activities

Each fiscal year, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure considers General Services Administration ("GSA") Capital Investment and Leasing Program resolutions.

On May 10, 2007, the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing on GSA's Fiscal Year 2008 Capital Investment and Leasing Program.

On June 28, 2007, the Committee approved the original resolution that authorized GSA to procure a lease to consolidate six locations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in San Diego, California

Amendments

No amendments to the resolution are expected at this time.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION SECTION 11(B) RESOLUTION

Background

This resolution directs the General Services Administration (“GSA”) to investigate the feasibility and need to construct or acquire a replacement facility for the United States District Court and other Federal agencies in Eureka, California.

Prior Legislative and Oversight Activities

Each fiscal year, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure considers GSA Capital Investment and Leasing Program resolutions.

On May 10, 2007, the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing on GSA’s Fiscal Year 2008 Capital Investment and Leasing Program.

Amendments

No amendments to the resolution are expected at this time.